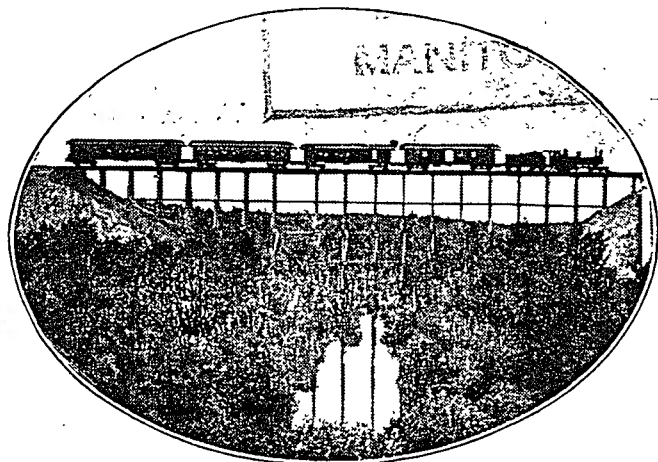


CLEARWATER

1876-1885



Being Some Record of the Life and Times of
Clearwater, Manitoba, from 1876 to 1885

— COMPILED BY —

The Women's Institute of Clearwater

March, 1927

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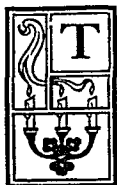
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CLEARWATER

These notes relate to the ~~Town of Clearwater and district~~
in the years from 1876 to 1885.



THE Clearwater correspondent for the Winnipeg Free Press in 1881 says: "Clearwater is a flourishing village—the town owners are Mr. L. O. Armstrong and Mr. Alexander McLaren." However there was very little to the village in 1879. It was situated in the valley and was moved to the present location after the railroad was built in 1885.

The first storekeeper was Mr. Tatchel succeeded by Mr. Reed, who kept store in a house. Then Mr. Hugh McKellar built a log store east of the creek. Mr. Robert Rogers was the next storekeeper; he built his store west of the creek and north of the mound hill. His first clerk was Jim McKnight followed by Alex. McBean.

In 1881 the first school was built; the first trustee board was James Laidlaw, Alexander McLaren and John Coulthard. L. O. Armstrong was Secretary-Treasurer. The building was erected by James McGregor, Malcolm Campbell and P. B. McLaren. The first teacher was William Galagher followed by Ed. Livingstone. The yearly salary was \$380.00. The total cost of building the school was \$650.00. Some of the first pupils were Alex. Charles and Will McLaren, Helen Laidlaw, Ed., Ida, and Margaret Affleck.

The rough lumber for building in those days was obtained at a saw mill at Rock Lake, but the rest had to be teamed from Emerson.

Clearwater also had a Register Office built near the school and log-store east of the creek. After a few years the office was removed to Pilot Mound and the building was used as a dwelling.

The first Missionary was Mr. Bothwick who gave occasional services in a house, then in the school until 1889. The Anglican Church was build in 1889 and the Presbyterian in 1894. The first Anglican Minister was Rev. C. N. F. Jeffery, M. A. (now Archdeacon, of Winnipeg.) He came in 1884. The first Methodist Minister was Mr. Stewart from Crystal City, and Dr. Farquharson, stationed at Pilot Mound, was the first Presbyterian Minister. The last two built their own homes on a salary of \$600.00 a year. There was also a Baptist Minister at Rock Lake.

One lady tells that on one Sabbath there were three services in succession at her home—Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist; then the Rev. George Rodgers arrived to hold the Anglican one, but on hearing that the people had had three services, he cancelled his, so it appears that the Clearwater people were well off in the way of services.

In 1879 Grydo Widmeyer built the first blacksmith and tin shop. William Gallafuse was the first blacksmith and the tinsmith was Mr. Widmeyer. Mrs. James McGregor has a copper boiler still in good condition which was made by him. He also made the ballot boxes that are still in use here. These shops were both burned down before 1882. Mr. Joe Thompson was the next blacksmith who had a shop in the valley.

The first shoemaker was George Affleck, followed by William Ford in later years. The first tailor was Hill Price, the next was William Smallacomb. Mrs. Alex. McLaren kept the first boarding house, and Peter McTavish the first Hotel. Dr. Munroe was the first doctor succeeded by Dr. Pinkerton then Dr. Riddle. In 1881 the first Flour Mill was built at the foot of the mound by John and Thomas Coulthard.

In the early days there were two special attractions in Clearwater, the boarding house and the Flour Mill. As the stopping places east and west of the town were kept by Bachelors, travellers made here for supper, bed and breakfast. People came for miles for flour.

The railroad was built to Manitou in 1883 and to Boissevain in 1885. The first agent was Mr. Hyser then Mr. Lavery.

Before the railroad, the trip to Emerson would take a week. Fifty miles of the trip was through the Mennonite settlement where it was hard to get supplies. The Mail came by stage from Emerson in 1880. The nearest Postoffice was then at Mountain City, later at Crystal City, then Clearwater and from here extended to Wakopa. Mr. Robert Rogers kept the first Postoffice and Mr. Frank Collins drove the Mail from Mountain City in 1882 and 1883.

Some of the people living in Clearwater in the early eighties were Mr. and Mrs. Alexander McLaren and family, Mr. and Mrs. George Affleck, Mrs. Price, and Hill and Nellie Price, Annie, Ida, John and Al. Affleck, Robert Rogers, Mr. and Mrs. Alex. McBean, Mr. and Mrs. James McGregor, Mr. and Mrs. George Coulthard, Mr. and Mrs. Hobkirk, Mrs. Widmeyer and family, Mr. and Mrs. William Cranston, Dr. Pinkerton.

In 1876 John Argue came to the district and Mills Argue in 1877. They homesteaded the present N. C. Argue land.

Most of the homesteads were taken up in 1879 or before, 1-13 was not yet surveyed. In 1878 Alexander McLaren homesteaded where Peter now lives.

In 1879 D. G. McIntyre homesteaded on his present location also Murdoch McRae and his brother Thomas. Others coming to the district that year were John and Alex. McTavish, John L. McIntyre, James McGregor, Jim McKnight, Moore Duncan, and Mrs. Widmeyer and family.

In 1880, came Hugh McKellar, N. C. Argue, John and Thomas Coulthard, Miss Catherine McTavish, James Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. William Thomson, Jose Lawrence, Robert Rogers (now the Hon. Robert Rogers), Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Laughlin and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Ford and family.

In 1881 came John and Thomas Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. William Coulthard, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Strain and family, Mr. and Mrs. William Cranston.

In 1882, came Miss Jane McKay (Mrs. John Coulthard), Malcolm McKay, Ben McIntyre, Finlay McEwan, and Mr. and Mrs. Obed Jory.

In 1883 came Miss Mary Leich (Mrs. D. G. McIntyre), Mr. and Mrs. Dunc. Graham and Mrs. Alex. McTavish.

The first settlers of the south district included Mr. and Mrs. James Corbett, Mr. and Mrs. Potter, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Davis. Mr. Davis was the district photographer in these days.

Miss Annie Affleck (afterwards Mrs. H. Cameron) was the first organist for Church and concerts. She, accompanied by Mr. James Laidlaw, used to travel for miles giving concerts. She sang and played and he gave Scotch readings. Helen Laidlaw was the next organist.

The first wedding west of the Pembina was James Stewart and Catherine McTavish. Other early weddings were John Coulthard and Jane McKay (April 1882), Alex. McBean and Mary McLaren (Nov. 1882), Malcolm Campbell and Sarah McLaren, Dan. G. McIntyre and Mary Leich, James McGregor and Elsie McLaren, John Campbell and Lizzie Clegg, Hugh McKnight and Carrie Waters.

The oldest buildings in town at the present are the houses occupied by Mr. Rodgers, Mrs. Cranston and Mrs. Penman.

THE FOLLOWING REFERS TO THE NORTH

The first family to settle in the district North of town was John Adams, his wife and three daughters; they came in June, 1878. Mrs. Adams was the first woman west of the Pembina River. They had come from England to Ontario, and after a couple of years had joined the move westwards. During the summer months Mr. Adams worked at Nelsonville. Mrs. Adams remaining on the farm, at one time going for five months without seeing another white woman. The Indians were very kind to her and traded fish and game for bread or other food. Twice they lost their shanty by fire, one time only saving the family Bible and the other a feather tick and some bedding.

Frank Bell and Dan Stoddard (now the Rev. D. Stoddard) came the end of June 1878, and Thomas Bell in

1879. They built one shack and all lived in it. George Gilbert and family bought the farm next Frank Bells' from Dr. Munro⁷ in 1880. James Laidlaw and family settled on their farm the same year and Henry Ranson and his sister on the next farm east.

Alexander McLaren and sons Peter and Jack came to stay in 1879. Peter returned east and brought back his bride the following year. John Affleck and son Will, came west in 1880; the rest of the family in 1881. Pete and John Goosen, from Holland, took homesteads along the Cypress Valley in 1885 but never cultivated the land, and some years later moved to B. C.

In 1882 Frank Collins homesteaded south of Rock Lake and in 1890 bought Wesley Greenway's homestead. James Cavers and family were also pioneers homesteading on the south shore of Rock Lake. Descendants of these early settlers are still residing on these farms.

The first school was built in 1886 called "The Oaks". The land was bought from Dan Stoddard. Mr. George Gilbert was the first school teacher. The school was the social centre of the district. A singing school was conducted by Mr. Gilbert; also a Literary Society. The Sabbath School met there too with John Affleck as Superintendent. Church service was held in Mr. Affleck's home, the Preacher being the Rev. Mr. Marney, a Baptist, who homesteaded what was afterwards known as the Dempster place.

James Laidlaw was a Magistrate and a machine agent. He and Mr. Affleck were the owners of the district's first binder, and the first day it was in operation the men for miles around came to see it work. Mr. Affleck brought a double buggy from Ontario; it was the only one in the district for several years.

Frank Bell made his own bobsleigh, his tools being an axe, an inch augur and a butcher knife. The first frame house was built by Mr. Laidlaw; the first threshing machine run by a horse power, was a company affair among the neighbors. Wood cutting and crushing was done for years after with this horse power.

Maggie Laidlaw and Richard Thurtell, of Teeswater, Ontario, were the first couple married in this settlement, the Rev. James Farquharson, of Pilot Mound, officiated; it was his first marriage ceremony and he was very nervous. Emma Adams was the first girl born in the district and Jim Bell the first boy.

WEST OF CLEARWATER

Robert Strain and family settled in 1880, but later moved away. Thomas Lugton lived on the Ritchie Place. Alex. Ross moved there with his family after Lugton left. Mrs. Gallafuse homesteaded what was later Henry Fiskel's farm, and several of her sons took surrounding land about 1881. In 1888, Hector McKellar and family moved on to one of the Gallafuse farms. Where Joe Wall lives now was Elsie McLaren's tree claim.

Joe Lawrence homesteaded a mile west of town; he was one of the most interesting pioneers, known for a time as "Goose Grease Joe." Mr. A. A. Hobkirk took his homestead east of the present Charlie McKellar farm.

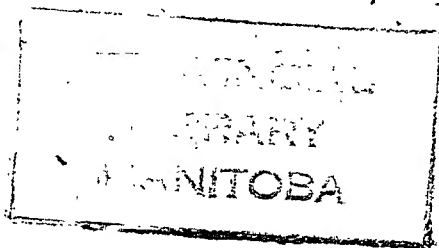
The first teacher in this west district was Mr. Will Haney. The Church service was held in the school by the Rev. James Cairns, from North of Rock Lake. The first wedding in this district was at the Hector McKellar home—the parties being Thomas Bell and Annie Reynolds, sister of Mrs. McKellar.

EAST OF CLEARWATER

The part east of town was settled at the same time as the rest. Archie Taylor and family came from Ontario in 1881 and bought a farm. Mr. Ward homesteaded the present Charlie Smith farm; Sam Robinson settled on the Hill in 1880. The present Beavis Place was the tree claim of Mary Stoddart. It was later bought by Sam Hicks.

The land for the Clearwater cemetery was donated by Alexander McLaren. Mrs. Hugh McKellar, nee Jennie Laidlaw, was the first one laid to rest in it, in 1881.

Compiled by Miss Elna Collins and Miss Ethel Coulthard
March, 1927.







Pilot Mound Sentinel Print

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